



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 29 August 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
29 AUGUST 1968

1. Czechoslovakia -
Soviet Union

The Czechoslovak populace so far has heeded the leadership's appeals for order, although the people are making no effort to hide the fact that the pill is a bitter one. We still anticipate some hostile encounters between Czechoslovak youth and Soviet soldiers. Moscow moved more ground troops into the country the first part of this week.

Czech Premier Cernik has confirmed that the foreign troops are to be withdrawn in stages, but that the pace of withdrawal is to be the subject of negotiations between Prague and the interventionist states. We have no further word on yesterday's Yugoslav press report that the Czechs will meet the Soviets and the Eastern European leaders in Dresden in 10 or 15 days.

Although the Czech leaders seem to have quieted the first emotional reactions to the Moscow agreement, they still have to get the formal endorsement of the party and legislature. Their first task is to deal with the new central committee, elected by a secret party congress early in the occupation and promptly branded illegal by the Soviets. This issue also illustrates the fundamental dilemma they face--how to satisfy Moscow without being repudiated as quislings by their vigilant compatriots.

2. South Vietnam

A forward element of COSVN may have moved from the Cambodian border to within about 20 miles of Saigon. This element made a similar move at the time of the Tet offensive. There are other indications.

of moves which would be preliminary to a major attack on Saigon.

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3. Bulgaria-Rumania

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4. Mexico

The government, which had been bending over backward to avoid a confrontation with the students, got tough yesterday. Word came down from Diaz Ordaz that student disorders must be stopped, and several demonstrators were injured in clashes with the security forces.

If the students run true to type, these measures will merely whet their appetite for combat. The government expects more trouble

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The embassy reported earlier yesterday that Mexican labor leaders fear they may not be able to keep the workers from joining the students if the unrest continues much longer.

5. Guatemala

Ambassador Mein's assassins apparently were members of the pro-Castro terrorist organization in Guatemala which has been trying to zero in on him and other US officials for some time. This time they may have been trying to kidnap rather than to kill him. The government has declared a state of siege, but no significant leads have turned up so far.

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6. Jordan-Israel

Husayn's brother, Prince Muhammad, said yesterday that the Israelis have moved over 100 tanks into Israeli-held Syrian territory just north of Jordan. If a force of this size attacks, he added, Jordan will ask the other Arab states for help.

The Jordanians clearly are worried that Israel may try to seize strategic high ground which is now held by Jordan, but we have no other word of an Israeli buildup. Muhammad, who is minding the store while Husayn is attending the wedding of another brother in Pakistan, is somewhat erratic and may have inflated the reports he has received of Israeli activity.

7. Soviet Union

Satellite photography indicates that the Soviets may be building their big Y-class ballistic missile submarine at the Komsomolsk shipyard in eastern Siberia. Until now this submarine has been produced only at the Severodvinsk yard in European Russia.

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8. Pakistan - Soviet Union

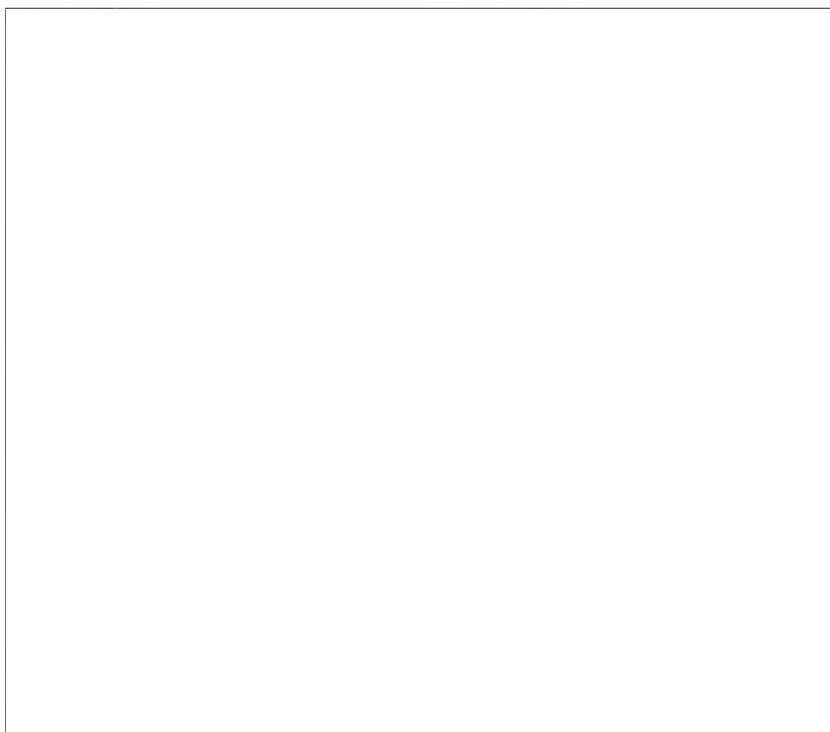
Ayub's defense minister has now told Ambassador Oehlert that the Soviets have agreed in principle to sell Pakistan any military hardware it wants, including tanks. The defense minister says that Ayub is reluctant to buy Soviet tanks but will do so if Pakistan's two-year search for similar US equipment does not bear fruit soon.

Ayub's reluctance to jeopardize a potential supply source is apparent in his mild criticism of Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia.

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9. Finland -
Soviet Union

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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29 August 1968

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

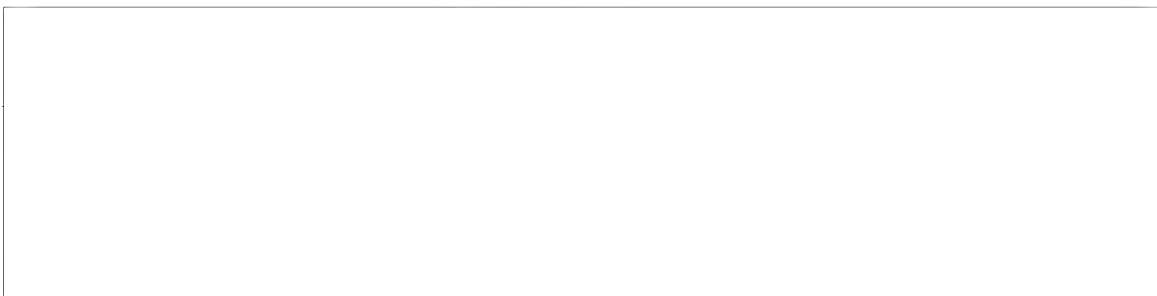
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



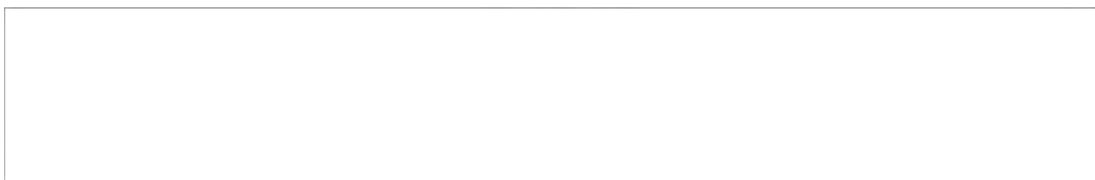
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Truck Count Down: The number of trucks sighted by US pilots south of the 19th parallel in North Vietnam during the week of 12-18 August, totaled 577, about a 29 percent decrease from both the previous seven-day period and the weekly average noted since 1 April. This reduction is probably due, in large part, to the poor weather conditions over southern North Vietnam during the first half of the week which restricted US aircraft coverage and hindered Communist truck operations.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Reply to Ambassador Harriman: In a direct comment on the Democratic convention, Xuan Thuy charged in his formal presentation yesterday that the administration's

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Vietnam policy was responsible for the magnitude of the protest movement in Chicago. "US authorities," he said, "have had to use barbed wires and tens of thousands of troops and police agents to cope with the indignation of the American people." He added that American youth protesting "No, no, we won't go to Vietnam" had struck fear into the hearts of US officials.

Despite all this, Xuan Thuy's press aide later denied that Hanoi had ever interfered in US politics.

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